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Two Decades of Excellence

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Two Decades of Excellence

Abstract

The inaugural issue of The Park Place Economist was published in 1993, making this volume the 20th edition. Over the last twenty years, the journal has remained true to its goals of developing critical thinking skills, encouraging academic research, promoting leadership abilities, and establishing alumni connections. However, The Park Place Economist has evolved with each new volume, benefiting from the advances in technology that have been realized during its lifetime as well as featuring topics that reflect the economic conditions of the time.

TWO DECADES OF EXCELLENCE

ANDREA KERWIN & ELIZABETH LUIBICICH

The inaugural issue of *The Park Place Economist* was published in 1993, making this volume the 20th edition. Over the last twenty years, the journal has remained true to its goals of developing critical thinking skills, encouraging academic research, promoting leadership abilities, and establishing alumni connections. However, *The Park Place Economist* has evolved with each new volume, benefiting from the advances in technology that have been realized during its lifetime as well as featuring topics that reflect the economic conditions of the time.

At its inception, *The Park Place Economist* staff had to make do with limited resources. Students did not have the same technological capabilities that they are privy to today. The first few journals were written in a time before Microsoft Word and the internet were common. The formatting of the journal improved as the students of the university had better access to technology. The front covers of the first few journals were simple, yet effective; by 1998, the covers had become works of art. Although, the cover and formatting of the journal may not be as important as the content, it still reflects the hard work of the journal's staff. As technology has improved, peoples' expectations of the journal layout have changed as well. *The Park Place Economist* has moved parallel with the times, thus improving it each year. The look of the journal has become an expression of student creativity, just as the content of the journal is an expression of student interest and imagination.

The research within the journal has varied over the past twenty years, reflecting the changing economic state of the country as well as the different opinions and interests of students. For example, in 2011, a year after the gulf coast oil spill, a research paper was written about oil spills and the future prices of crude oil. Such an article was fitting to be published that year as the spill commanded constant media attention and concern from politicians, environmentalists, and economists. In 2009, a student wrote about the impact of the September 11th tragedy on Middle Eastern immigrants. Every student at the university remembers the day the Twin Towers fell, and benefited from the relevance of the article. *The Park Place Economist* does not only address pertinent national events. In 2003, an article was written about horse race betting and the stock market. This provided an interesting perspective to readers considering most people can identify with the temptation to gamble, and possibly, win big. *The Park Place Economist* has always been a journal for the entire Illinois Wesleyan University community as it explores a broad spectrum of issues. Each edition of *The Park Place Economist* brings information about what Wesleyan students think of a particular issue at a particular time.

While many aspects of *The Park Place Economist* have evolved over time, the breadth of topics included has remained steady. The articles included in the 20th issue of *The Park Place Economist* address concerns relating to the housing market crisis, car manufacturing, immigration, and environmental concerns. Since the publication of the very first issue, both international and local issues have been analyzed and explained. Others have researched the economic aspect of a specific field seemingly unaffected by economic concepts and demonstrated a clear connections between the two, most of which were written about professional sports.

The future of *The Park Place Economist* is limitless. As evidenced by the scope of topics included in the past twenty publications, the economic conditions of the world are constantly changing. Economic crises plague many parts of the world today, and the environment is of increasing importance in political and economic discourse. Readers will undoubtedly see further environmental research and discussions of the current global financial crisis included in the journal in the near future. Students have already begun applying economic concepts to their work in other fields, making *The Park Place Economist* more relevant to other academic departments at Illinois Wesleyan. While the publication remains focused on economic topics, submissions are received from students in other departments as well, such as Political Science. The number of submissions for publication also continues to grow, making the selection of articles more competitive and thus ensuring the quality of research and work included in the final publication.

The size of the economics department at Illinois Wesleyan grows with each passing year. Illinois Wesleyan students have an increased interest in today's economy as a result of the recent recession and current recovery efforts. As the size of the department grows, so does the commitment and quality of this journal. *The Park Place Economist* can only continue to improve and develop in the future. With each new volume it develops into a more valuable resource for both Illinois Wesleyan students and the economics community as a whole.

